

**WORLD WAR I LEADERSHIP
CHARACTERISTICS THAT COULD
MAKE FUTURE MILITARY LEADERS
SUCCESSFUL**

**A MONOGRAPH
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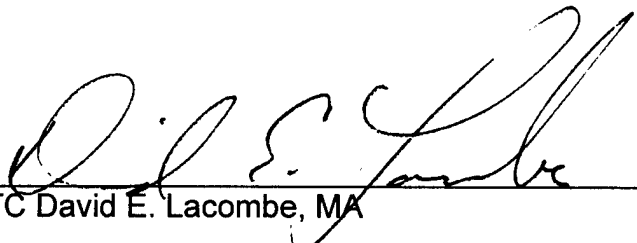
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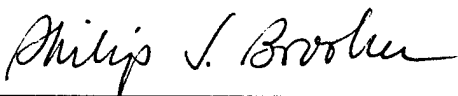
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ABSTRACT

WORLD WAR I LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS THAT COULD MAKE FUTURE MILITARY LEADERS SUCCESSFUL by MAJ Robert J. Paquin, USA, 56 pages.

This monograph analyzes the leadership characteristics that suggest a rapid acceptance of changing conditions in warfare among senior leaders and which leadership characteristics tend to suggest a more conservative approach. This conservative approach fails to recognize and adapt to the new emerging conditions. This research studied two World War I British leaders, General Sir Ivor Maxse and General Sir Hurbert Gough, and compared and contrasted their leadership characteristics. From this, the research identified the most significant leadership characteristics that allowed these leaders to successfully adapt quickly in a time of transition.

The criteria for analysis was based on four leadership characteristics as defined in FM 22-100, Army Leadership: Revised Final Draft, dated June 1998. The four leadership characteristics used as evaluation criteria were personal courage, initiative, tactical skill, and learning.

A comparison of the role of the two World War I leaders yields the conclusion that certain leadership characteristics allowed them to adapt more easily in an evolving environment and facilitated successful battlefield leadership. These characteristics were moral courage, initiative, tactical skill and the application of knowledge through effective, continual learning.

The monograph provides valuable insights into what leadership characteristics will allow current and future leaders to be successful, and unsuccessful, during a military transitional period. Our leaders must be creative, intuitive, dynamic, and able to make contemplated decisions, and have the courage and determination to act on them. The requirement for developing those leaders is an important one for the United States and a demanding one for the U.S. Army. An understanding of these leadership characteristics and the reasons that they facilitate successful battlefield leadership can provide an intellectual foundation beneficial to the Army as it prepares for future warfare.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Victory smiles upon those who anticipate the changes in the character of war, not upon those who wait to adapt themselves after the changes occur. . . . Those who are ready first not only will win quickly, but will win with the fewest sacrifices and the minimum expenditure of means.

Giulio Douhet *Command of the Air*¹

Introduction, Background and Significance

The study of leadership is very important. Army leaders are responsible for the planning, preparation and execution of the Army's mission -- Preserve the peace and security, and provide for the defense of the United States, the Territories, Commonwealths, and Possessions, and any areas occupied by the United States; support national policies; implement national objectives; and overcome any nations responsible for aggressive acts that imperil the peace and security of the United States.² The consequences of failing to accomplish this mission are great. It is no less than the disintegration of our nation.

The need for leadership will remain a constant. Someone will always have to make decisions and give orders -- a process that will be irrelevant unless others follow these orders. Given the speed with which events will occur and the wide potential visibility of

military actions, the penalties for an inability to make decisions and have them obeyed probably are more catastrophic and more instantaneous than ever before.

Leadership therefore remains the essential issue in operations and in preparing people for operations. Confidence in the individual who makes the decisions and gives the orders is of the essence – confidence that leaders know what they are doing, that they understand and are motivated by interest of the unit, and that they have the flexibility of mind to exploit fully all the talents of their subordinates. Field Manual (FM) 22-100 defines leadership as the process of “influencing people—by providing purpose, direction, and motivation – while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization.”³

In view of the importance in the successful accomplishment of the Army’s mission and the long range consequences for future army readiness, it is appropriate that the Army take a critical look at the leadership characteristics needed to lead the Army through a transitional period.

Purpose and Methodology

The purpose of this monograph is to answer the question, “What are the leadership characteristics that suggest a rapid acceptance of changing conditions in warfare among senior leaders and which leadership characteristics tend to suggest a more conservative approach, which fails to recognize and adapt to the new emerging conditions?”

History offers valuable insight into leadership characteristics of past battlefield leaders and their applicability to future crises. This research studied two World War I British leaders, General Sir Ivor Maxse and General Sir Hurbert Gough, and compared and contrasted their leadership characteristics. From this, the research identified the most

significant leadership characteristics that allowed these leaders to successfully adapt quickly in a time of transition.

The criteria for analysis was based on selective leadership characteristics defined in FM 22-100, Army Leadership: Revised Final Draft, dated June 1998. Personal courage, initiative, tactical skill, and learning were the four leadership characteristics used as evaluation criteria. They were selected from the complete list of leadership characteristics discussed in the manual because they focus on leadership traits needed during a time of change.

Why Analyze World War I Leaders?

Warfare is in a state of constant change and evolution. However, periodically the rate and scale of change increases dramatically; no matter what name is given to these periods, militaries must quickly adapt or suffer defeat. The First World War was one such period that fundamentally altered the ways in which war and combat were conducted. The basic structure of warfare today was born in the trenches of the First World War and any changes currently underway or probable in the near future will be reflected on that model.⁴

The changes that occurred in the four short years between 1914 and 1918 range from the most basic levels of combat to the mobilization of national economies and populations. While this monograph focuses on the role of leadership in adapting to change, it also briefly outlines the nature of the changes themselves that were occurring in order to demonstrate the utility of examining the First World War as a model worthy of consideration for present analysis. Every system within the present military model today existed or was created during the First World War.

Beginning at the most basic level of combat, the infantry small unit fight, World War I saw the transition from both dense linear formations to loose fluid formations and from an almost pure rifle organization to a combined arms organization within the small unit. The First World War began with both offensive and defensive doctrine and tactics at the small unit level based on maintaining a continuous firing line and tight control by leaders at the company and battalion level. The organization of units below the regiment was simple and direct: a rifle battalion was just that, an organization of approximately 1,000 rifles and 2-4 machine guns.⁵ The battalion usually fought pure and in close proximity to the other battalions of the parent regiment or brigade. By the end of the war, both these facts had changed.

Doctrine and tactics had changed profoundly toward an admittedly linear, but now discontinuous line of positions or probing small units. Areas became the principal defensive arrangement with distinct but mutually supporting strong points rather than a continuous line. In the attack, small units (platoon and company-sized) were expected to operate within supporting distance of one another but separated sometimes by hundreds of yards from one another.⁶

The organizations themselves had also been transformed. Battalions were now combined arms units of rifles, machine-gun, mortars, flame-throwers, and sometimes even accompanying field guns. If the basic organization of the battalion was simple, specialist units were cross-attached to provide the combined arms elements needed to conduct combat in the new way. A battalion commander of 1914 would not even recognize his unit in 1918 much less the way it fought. However, a battalion commander of 1918 would

be impressed by our weapons systems today, yet comfortable in understanding how the pieces fit together.

If the infantry fight changed during the First World War, colonial operations had hinted at the changes that were to take place in combat at that level. The changes in the artillery systems, doctrine, tactics and technique were even more dramatic and fundamental to our current combat paradigm. Artillery began the First World War primarily as a direct-fire system tied closely to the division firefight. Most guns were light field pieces of approximately 75 mm, designed to fire in the direct support of attacking or defending rifle units, usually within visual sight of both supported troops and the target. The predominant ammunition was shrapnel with very little high explosive. A few siege guns were available to deal with complex prepared fortifications, but high angle or indirect-fire was not considered in the open field battle.⁷

Within weeks of the war's beginning, artillery had been forced to retreat into concealed and indirect-fire positions. High-explosive fuzed ammunition was in critical shortage for the first two years of the war. Medium, heavy and even super-heavy guns were in demand by every echelon of command. Many senior officers saw artillery as the only escape mechanism from the trench deadlock. Indirect-fire became the most common use for artillery, with fires being carefully pre-planned. As the war progressed observation and prediction techniques improved, meteorological tables, individual gun wear patterns, and ammunition lot testing were all developed and used to increase accuracy.⁸

In addition to changes within the infantry and artillery, other older services were fundamentally changed between 1914 and 1918. Telegraph and telephone systems were

used at the Army and Corps level in 1914 generally in static installations, but by 1918, telephone was laid in the attack as far as company and in exceptional case to platoon levels. But more importantly for the future, radio developed from a very cumbersome and essentially fixed site system to one that could accompany the troops forward to provide flexible communications from the front lines enabling close coordination of widely separated units and formations. Engineers developed new skills as assault pioneers, going well beyond their traditional roles of building fortifications and bridges to being the leading edge of attacking formations, equipped to deal with strong points and obstacles. Motorization affected first the logistical and administrative elements of warfare, but soon was expanded to include motor-machine gun units, reconnaissance and even transportation of combat units to and across the battlefield in some cases.

It was in the expansion of the use of aircraft and the introduction of tanks that the greatest changes for the future were presaged however. Aircraft began the war as a useful long range adjunct to horse cavalry in its reconnaissance role. By war's end, aircraft were used in many new roles, air to air combat, ground attack, target acquisition and observation, battlefield interdiction, strategic bombing, combat resupply of forward or isolated units and even in the transportation and dropping of paratroopers.⁹ The growth of airpower as an element of a nation's military power can be seen in the creation of the Royal Air Force in 1918.

The creation of the RAF was paralleled by the creation of the Tank Corps within the Army. Beginning as a solely technical means to break the trench deadlock of the western front; by 1918 the rudimentary tanks of 1916 had developed into weapons that could

range fast enough and far enough to have a decisive effect on battle and within a few years would become robust enough to have an operational effect.¹⁰ The tanks of 1916 were similar in concept and use to the siege towers of ancient and medieval warfare. The tanks of 1918 required battlefield commanders from army level on down to rethink tactics to fully integrate them into both offense and defense, they had become a critical element of combined arms warfare.

Weapons of mass destruction also made their first modern appearance in the First World War in the form of poison gas. While failing to achieve the decisive effect hoped for, it too complicated the combined arms battle and had to be integrated into planning at all levels whether as plans to use it or plans to defend against it.

While all of these developments were begun in the First World War, they have continued to affect warfare in the twentieth century. As we stand on the verge now of the twenty-first century, the modern military paradigm stands on a base built between 1914 and 1918. If as many believe warfare is entering another period of rapid evolution or revolution as a result of emerging technologies, it is useful to identify those leadership techniques which proved critical to successfully adapting to first generation technological warfare. Many of the changes occurring or forecast in the near future have parallels in the 1914-1918 period. Among them are radical new propulsion systems for land vehicles which may enhance the cross-country capabilities of armored vehicles, new logistical methods which will revolutionize the logistics business as much as trucks changed it in 1914-1918 and new communications means which will make the radio seem as archaic as flag signals and runners do to the soldiers of today.

CHAPTER 2

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Introduction to Criteria.

The purpose of this chapter is three fold: 1) to describe the framework of the new FM 22-100, Army Leadership, 2) define the leadership characteristics chosen to analyze General Sir Maxse and General Gough, and 3) explain the reason why these characteristics were chosen out of the total seventeen characteristics presented in FM 22-100.

The United States Army is in the process of rewriting FM 22-100, Army Leadership, to reaffirm the importance of leadership to the Army. The new FM 22-100 stresses the importance of the role of the leader in teaching and mentoring these leadership characteristics. By focusing on the leader development process, the new doctrine will give leaders the basis to create an organizational environment that fosters the development of effective leaders. As a goal, the Army wants to go beyond simply creating temporary changes in their leaders, military and civilian. It wants to instill these leadership characteristics and the methods to develop them into the daily activity of the Army.¹¹

The new FM 22-100, Army Leadership: Revised Final Draft, dated June 1998 provides a comprehensive, future oriented leadership doctrine. The focus of this manual is

to help Army leaders fight and win the nation's wars and serve the common defense of the United States. The new leadership doctrine has three purposes:

- ◆ To provide a unified theory of leadership for America's Army: Active and Reserve component, military and civilian, commissioned and noncommissioned officer, and enlisted soldiers.
- ◆ To provide leadership doctrine to meet mission requirements throughout the full spectrum of conflict.
- ◆ To provide a comprehensive and adaptable leadership manual for the twenty-first century.¹²

Field Manual 22-100 is the product of two and one half years of extensive research by senior leaders in the U.S. Army Center for Army Leadership at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The experts and references used to develop this doctrinally manual are from military and non-military backgrounds and are widely accepted throughout the world as substantiated experts in the leadership field. This manual serves the U.S. Army as a basis for leadership assessment and evaluation, developmental counseling and leader development, a starting point for the development and execution of leadership tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs), and an incentive for the individual leader's self-development objectives and initiatives.

The Army leadership framework has defined seven values, three attributes, four skills and three actions as the fundamental leadership characteristics to prepare leaders. Character is described in terms of Army values and attributes, and understanding the leader's relationship to the human dimension of the organization. Field Manual 22-100

subdivides skills into four dimensions - interpersonal, conceptual, technical and tactical. Actions are subdivided under three dimensions – influencing, operating, and improving. Figure 2-1 shows this framework and the specific values, attributes, skills and actions.

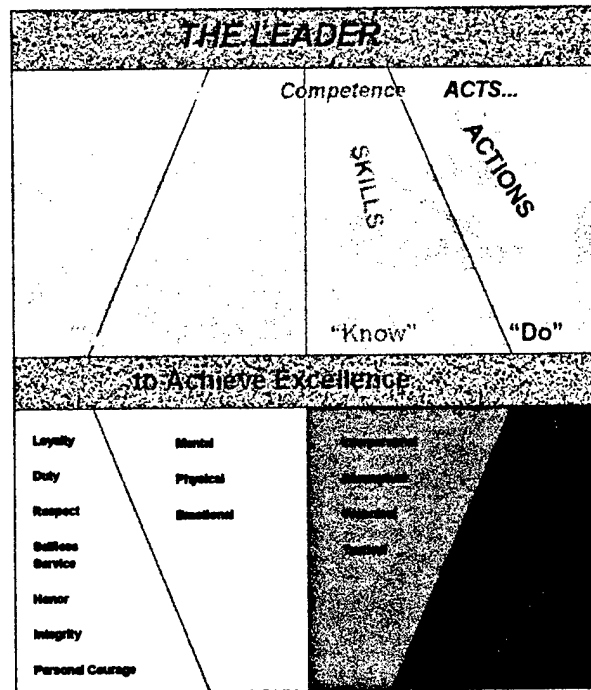


Figure 2-1. The Army Leadership Framework.¹³

Criteria Defined.

This monograph used the doctrinal definition of these leadership characteristics as found in FM 22-100. The main reason these definitions were used is that this doctrine is the official leadership capstone manual for the U.S. Army and because of the amount of extensive and substantiated research that has gone into its develop.

Personal Courage Defined

Personal courage is one of the seven Army values that is a portion of the make up a persons character. This value, along with the other six Army values and three attributes combine and interact to determine a person's character. Character is the sum total of an

individual's personality traits. Leaders must have strong character to motivate their subordinates to follow.

Values are “the social principles, goals or standards held by an individual, class, society, etc. . .”¹⁴ Personal experiences -- what we have seen, what we have learned, and whom we have interacted with -- help to develop a person's values. These values instinctually tell us what we need to be and how we need to act. “Army values remind us and tell the rest of the world – the civilian government we serve, the nation we protect, even our enemies – who we are and what we stand for.”¹⁵

Personal courage is the ability to put personal fears aside and to do what is necessary. Personal courage takes two forms, moral and physical.

Field Manual 22-100 defines physical courage as, “the bravery that allows a soldier to take risks in combat in spite of the fear of wounds or death.”¹⁶ In contrast, according to FM 22-100, “moral courage is what enables a leader to stand up for what a person believes is right, regardless of the consequences. The leader who takes responsibility for his decisions and actions, even when things go wrong, displays moral courage.”¹⁷ It is this aspect of personal courage that history has shown to be the most important, and therefore, this research will focus its analysis in that area of personal courage demonstrated by Generals' Maxse and Gough.

If a leader is courageous, he must be willing to look critically inside himself, consider new ideas, and change what needs changing.

Initiative Defined

As stated before, values and attributes combine and interact to determine a person's character. Field Manual 22-100 characterizes attributes as mental, physical, or emotional. Initiative is the one mental attribute chosen to be an evaluation criterion. An attribute is a characteristic or quality of a person. A person can either inherit or learn attributes. Since attributes can be learned, successful leaders will evaluate their personal attributes, identify weaknesses, and then learn and develop effective attributes in the effort to improve his or her leadership characteristics

Field Manual 22-100 defines initiative as, "the ability to be a self-starter – to act when there is no clear instructions, to act when the situation changes or when the plan falls apart. Initiative drives the leader to seek a better method, anticipate what must be done, and perform without waiting for instructions. Balanced with good judgement, it is an essential leader attribute."¹⁸

Tactical Skill Defined

Tactical skills assist leaders in making competent decisions concerning the arrangement and maneuver of units for battlefield success. Mastery of the art of tactics, which includes military decision making in a dynamic situation, the creative and flexible array of means to successfully accomplish assigned missions, and understanding the effects of combat on soldiers, requires tactical skill competence. Tactical skill is enhanced by the combination of interpersonal, conceptual and technical skills.¹⁹ "Interpersonal skill is competence in dealing with people. It involves coaching, teaching counseling, motivating and empowering. Conceptual skill is competence in handling ideas, thoughts and

concepts. It involves sound judgement as well as the ability to think creatively and reason analytically, critically and morally. Technical skill is competence with job-specific tasks.”²⁰ Field Manual 22-100 defines competence as knowing your profession and acting to improve your organization or unit.

Technical and interpersonal skills are easily understood skills. However, conceptual skills are complex and less understood. Therefore, conceptual skill will be defined in more detail as specified in FM 22-100.

Conceptual skill illustrates the leader's ability to accurately perceive the environment and assess the variables or forces operating within that environment in order to formulate effective thoughts, plans or actions. Conceptual skills involve critical reasoning, creative thinking, and moral reasoning.²¹

Critical reasoning challenges leaders to go beyond the surface or symptoms of a problem and to identify the related components in order to accurately define the problem and develop sound corrective actions. To facilitate critical reasoning a leader must understand the systems concept. In his book, *The Logic of Failure*, Dietrich Dorner defines a system as “a network of many variables in casual relationships to one another. Within a system, a variable may even have a casual relationship to itself, as it were.”²²

Creative thinking relates to the leader's ability to identify a more effective process to perform a routine or a unique operation using experience, knowledge, judgement, and intuition. Moral reasoning is the leader's ability to apply the values representative of the organization, shared by the culture of the organization, within the parameters of the law to a specific situation and to take the judicious action.

A systems understanding provides a leader an accurate perception of the environment by understanding the interrelation effects of the variables operating within the system. Once the leader understands these relationships between the variables, he can identify the critical nodes operating within the system. This understanding of the cause-and-effect relationships will allow the leader to predict the second- and third-order effects of his directives and policies throughout his organization.²³ Conceptual skills become increasingly important as a leader moves into positions of greater authority and responsibility because of the increase in quantity and ambiguity of the relationships between multiple systems and subsystems.

Effective military leaders must excel at tactical skills. They must combine education, self-study, and practical experience to develop effective interpersonal, conceptual, and technical skills in order to improve their tactical skill. This monograph only focused on the interrelationship of these three skills and analyzed how they can effect a commander's ability to perform tactical skill. It did not study the tactics used by General Maxse and Gough.

Learning Defined

Field Manual 22-100 defines three leadership characteristics that are action oriented, influencing, operating and improving. To improve themselves or their organizations, leaders must set priorities and establish a balance among competing demands. The leader must still execute his current mission, but anticipate and train to be better in the future. This may require sacrifice in the short-term in order to achieve long-term gains in self or

organizational proficiency. Leader actions that demonstrate improving are: developing, building, and learning.²⁴

Field Manual 22-100 defines learning as the ability to seek self-improvement and organizational growth. Leaders look at their environment, and based on their experience and what they see, find more effective methods of doing what is required. This includes envisioning, adapting and leading change. In the leadership aspect, learning is managing change and making it work for you and your organization. To do that, the leader must know what to change and maybe more importantly, what not to change.

Leaders that possess this characteristic understand that it is their responsibility to create a conducive learning environment. To create this environment the leader must explain to his subordinates why the subject is important, how it will help them and create an active learning environment by involving his subordinates in the educational process. People in organizations learn in three ways: self-, team-, and multiple-learning.²⁵ Self- and team-learning are self explanatory. Multiple-learning is learning from your personal experience and additionally, learning through the experience of other members in your organization.

Importance of Criteria.

The length of this monograph will not allow the researcher to use the seventeen leadership characteristics proposed in FM 22-100 as evaluation criteria to analyze Generals Maxse and Gough's leadership characteristics. These four characteristics from the complete list discussed in the manual were selected because they focus on leadership characteristics needed during a time of change.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF GENERALS MAXSE AND GOUGH'S LEADERSHIP

CHARACTERISTICS

Personal Courage

There are two kinds of courage, physical and moral, and he who would be a true leader must have both. Both are the products of the character-forming process, of the development of self-control, self-discipline, physical endurance, of knowledge of one's job and, therefore, of confidence. These qualities minimize fear and maximize sound judgement under pressure and – with some of that indispensable stuff called luck – often bring success from seemingly hopeless situations.

General Matthew B. Ridgeway
Former Army Chief of Staff²⁶

America requires soldiers and leaders that have a strong sense of personal courage. The United States military will need leaders who possess the moral character, firm will, and professional ability to separate warring factions; restore public order; reassure frightened civilians; protect and deliver humanitarian assistance; and to win the Nation's wars. Ultimately, America requires soldiers to be physically present in whatever situation develops, in any type of mission across the full spectrum of operations. Physical courage is required.

Generals' Maxse and Gough displayed physical courage throughout their military careers. General Maxse's level of physical courage was probably best described in a letter

that his GSO1²⁷ Herbert Shoubridge wrote to Maxse's wife. In the letter Shoubridge writes of Maxse, "He is extraordinarily fit and is always doing something or going somewhere. I am sure there is hardly a front line trench in our whole line (division) that he has not visited. Monty (his Aide) looks after him very well but we both find it rather difficult to keep him in order when it comes to his going to places he ought not to."²⁸

General Gough's "lead from the front" leadership style was much the same as Maxse's. When General Gough was the Second Cavalry Division commander, his Advanced Guard commander, BGC Beddington commented, "He (Gough) is here 5 minutes after me: he always liked to be well up so that he could see the next move and the country to his front before the main body got to where we were."²⁹ Neither Maxse nor Gough were ever criticized for always being in their headquarters, excessively tied to their communications link, they lead by physical presence before, during and after each major battle.

General Gough displayed numerous examples of moral courage early in his military career. It was characteristic of him to challenge senior officers and orders if they went against what he believed was correct. As the commander of the Second Cavalry Division, he frequently thinned out numbers in his brigades forward defenses when they were not actually being attacked. This practice eventually was widely used by unit commanders on the western front, but in 1914, it was not popular or approved by senior commanders. Most commanders felt that lightly defending the front was too risky, and that an enemy assault could easily defeat the lightened line. For the sake of conserving his soldiers' lives and energy, Gough was prepared to take this risk.³⁰

General Gough's moral courage dissipated later in his career. As the Fifth Army commander, General Gough was assigned the mission to defend a forty-mile front with only ten divisions, equivalent of roughly 5,500 yards of front per division³¹, against the main effort of the German offensive. British and French divisions were in reserve but under GHQ's³² control not Gough's. Several of the reserve divisions were misplaced and too far away to be responsive to Fifth Army's needs. Gough identified this problem early in the defensive preparation and he and his staff continually raised it as an issue to the GHQ staff. General Headquarters staff refused all requests by Fifth Army to relocate or attach any of the reserve forces. Finally, Gough personally called LTG Lawrence (chief of the General Staff) to try to resolve the problem. Lieutenant General Lawrence again refused any change to the plan. Did Lawrence consult with General Haig, the GHQ commander, or had Lawrence made the decision himself? We do not know because General Gough made a conscious decision not to ask to speak to General Haig.³³

For something as critical to the success of their mission, the movement of reserves, it seems that Gough should have insisted on talking to his commander and not the Chief of Staff. General Gough knew this decision was wrong and severely jeopardized the Fifth Army's ability to successfully defend its sector.

Early in June 1917, during the British Third Ypres offensive, Gough had also showed signs of becoming hesitant. As the Fifth (Reserve) Army commander, Gough was called forward to take over parts of the Fourth Army and the main effort of the BEF attack. General Haig brought Gough forward because he believed if any of his Army commanders could break through the German defense and exploit, it was Gough. "Immediately before

and after the opening of the battle, Haig asked Gough whether he would be ready at short notice to exploit any breach opened. . . .Gough replied that he preferred not to do so.”³⁴

Gough’s reasoning was that the ground was too broken up for the tanks to move forward and the commander (General Plummer) that knew the ground the best for the exploitation needed more time to methodically move his artillery forward.³⁵

After interviewing unit commanders on the ground, it was discovered that the main reason the tanks could not move forward was because the units they supported did not properly guide them through the minefields.³⁶ This attitude of reserve at the outset of an offensive operation was uncharacteristic of him. It is difficult to know the reason for it. It might be that Gough did not feel comfortable with the developing increased combined-armed tactics and mobility of tanks and artillery or it might be that the responsibility daunted him.

Did General Gough, upon becoming an Army commander lose, what Clausewitz termed determination – “the role of which is to limit the agonies of doubt and the perils of hesitation when the motives for action are inadequate.”³⁷ Clausewitz believes that only few men have a brilliant enough mind to have the determination to become great Generals such as Napoleon and Fredrick the Great. Many men show great determination as junior officers, but lose it as they rise in rank and responsibility. “Conscious of the need to be decisive, they also recognize the risks entailed by a wrong decision; since they are unfamiliar with the problems now facing them, their mind loses its former incisiveness.”³⁸ Research shows that as Gough rose in rank, with its entailed increase in responsibility, and

decrease in the ability to directly influence the actual engagement's outcomes, he lost the level determination and moral courage he displayed earlier in his career.

General Maxse's level of determination and moral courage did not diminish as his responsibilities increased or as the transitional developments of the style of warfare occurred. Maxse demonstrated high moral courage early in the war as the commander of the First Guards Brigade. During the 1914 British retreat from Mons, the First Division staff would continually order units to be ready to join the division retreat march at 0330 hours. Due to their incompetence at coordinating the division road march, units were continuously blocked at the start point and had to wait for hours for their turn to start the march. Maxse knew his men needed rest if they were going to be able to finish the retreat and still be able to successfully defeat the enemy when they reached the final defensive line. Maxse took the risk on his own shoulders of ordering his brigade to be prepared for the road march one hour after the time he was ordered to join the divisional column.³⁹

Later in Maxse's career, he displayed the same, if not an increased level of moral courage. In the spring of 1917, as the XVIII Corps commander, during the infamous Fifth Army retreat, General Maxse again showed his tenacity to do what is right. At this point of the fight, command of all British troops passed officially to the French. The French issued an order that if a further withdrawal of the line was required, Maxse's Corps was to withdraw with the French forces to southwest. However, Maxse knew that a gap of three miles already existed between his corps and the XIX British Corps, and if he retreated southwest, the gap between the two corps would increase. This would offer an opportunity to the enemy to separate the British Army from the French. When the French

commander gave the order, Maxse displayed extreme moral courage and did not conform, but ordered his divisions to move northwest, rather than southwest, and to make contact with the XIX Corps. General Gough praised Maxse and wrote, "Maxse's firmness and decisiveness in keeping his corps together and moving it north-westwards saved the Fifth Army, and in fact the whole British and Allied cause from a disaster...."⁴⁰

No matter how complex, unfamiliar, or desperate a situation General Maxse was put in, he continually surpassed the moral requirements of a leader. These include telling his superiors things they did not want to hear; accepting blame when subordinates have done wrong, even though not personally responsible for the errors; dismissing incompetent subordinates who may be friends; and, worst of all, giving orders to his subordinates to undertake tasks which were certain to cause them to incur heavy casualties.⁴¹

Initiative

It takes more than tanks and guns and planes to win. It takes more than masses of men. It takes more than heroism, more than self-sacrifice, more than leadership. Modern war requires trained minds....The days of unthinking masses of firepower are over. Individual intelligence, individual understanding, and individual initiative in all ranks will be powerful weapons in our ultimate success.

General Brehon B. Somervell
*Public Addresses, 1941-1942*⁴²

General (Retired) Gordon Sullivan best articulated the leadership characteristic, initiative, when he wrote, "When all is said and done, being a leader is about standing up, making judgements, accepting responsibility, and taking action."⁴³ General Sullivan argues that if a leader is going to successfully develop the personal attribute of initiative, the leader must transition from an immature leadership action cycle of Observe, Orient,

Decide, and Act to a more mature one of Observe, Reflect, Decide, Act, and Learn. See Figure 3-1. The stages of reflection and learn are the critical differences between the two leadership cycles.

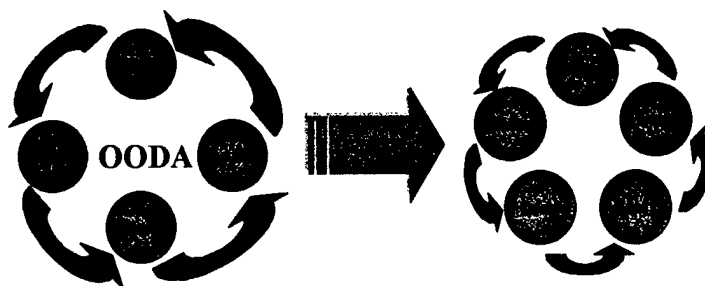


Figure 3-1. Leadership Action Cycle Transition.⁴⁴

Reflection is critical, but the leader must connect it to a conscious, structured action in a repetitive, constantly adjusted leadership process. Initiative left unchecked by a reflective thought process most often brings about hasty, detrimental decisions.

Since reflection is so critical, then the source, – the leader’s military mind – that the leader must reflect on is crucial. The better developed and more well rounded this source is, the better his determined action will be. At the core of the development of the military mind is the study of military art and science. This military education must be grounded in military theory, military history, simulations, and training exercises.⁴⁵

Military theory is a professionally justified, reliable system of beliefs about the nature of war. It provides a structure for clear thinking and problem solving. One of the ways military theory accomplishes its task is by helping the leader recognize changes when they occur. The evolution of new technologies or the application of old technologies using new methods drive these changes. These changes place an extreme burden on the leader,

limited by his understanding of military theory, to understand the new conditions of his environment, as they really are.⁴⁶

Military history is more than a description of past engagements. "It is an expression of the creative will of the commander in his attempts to solve problems and implement solutions in a lethal environment."⁴⁷ While history may not repeat itself, human nature does. Studying battles, and asking "Why?", provides insights into how leaders of the past have dealt with difficult and ambiguous challenges.⁴⁸ Military history, theory, and personal experiences built upon simulation and training exercises provide the context from which to reflect upon while conducting the leadership action cycle.

One of the earliest major engagements in the Vietnam conflict was fought by the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, led by Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Hal Moore. This battle occurred in the Ia Drang Valley, and is better known as the battle of "LZ XRAY". During the fight, several staff officers observed LTC Moore, occasionally, to withdraw from the chaos of running the battle. After the battle, during a debriefing, when questioned about these periods of withdrawal, Moore said that he had been reflecting. The method LTC Moore used to reflect was to ask himself three questions: 1) What is happening?, 2) What is not happening?, and 3) What can I do to influence the action?.⁴⁹ By asking himself the first two questions, LTC Moore was better able to anticipate what might or might not happen next. By reflecting on these answers, "he was able to open his mind to broader opportunities, to see the full range of his options."⁵⁰ These options developed into the answer to his third question. More importantly, this is where history shows that the leader

can start to understand how he can gain or regain the initiative, and will allow him to become proactive and reactive versus being controlled by events and solely reactive.

As stated earlier, the learning stage of the leadership action cycle is also critical. Within this step of the cycle, the leader relates the outcomes of his decision and action to the situation and to potential future action. This will provide him insight on how he needs to modify his and his organization's behavior to become more effective.⁵¹ I will discuss more fully the importance of the role of learning later in this chapter.

Throughout his career General Gough, developed a reputation of being impulsive, quick tempered, and making hasty decisions. Just prior to his leaving his regiment in India, Captain Gough's regimental commander evaluation of his performance included these comments: " 'Field Movements – Good but hasty.' 'Judgement and tact – impulsive.' 'Temper – quick.' ”⁵²

In the British Battles for Ladysmith against the Boers, Gough was locally promoted to Major, without pay, and put in command of a Cavalry Regiment. During one of his regiment's patrols, Gough's unit stumbles upon what he believed to be an isolated element of two hundred Boers that were dismounted and in a position that allowed Gough's unit to conduct a surprise attack.⁵³ Without conducting a proper reconnaissance of the area, and reflecting on the Boers order of battle, Gough orders his regiment to covertly move forward and attack. Unfortunately, his bold plan was based on incomplete information. The Boer element he was attacking was not a single body, but a detachment of a much larger force. Just as the attack started the main body of the Boer force, over a thousand strong, was also approaching the detached Boer element. This hasty, impulsive action

resulted in the death, injury, or capture of two-thirds of his regiment. Although this incident was a disaster, Gough's superiors did not hold him accountable because at the time, British leadership was suffering from excessive prudence, irresolution, and the ability to think and act quickly.⁵⁴ They did not want to further engrain the lack of initiative into their officer corps.

Later in his career, during WWI, as an Army commander, General Gough would visit his divisions' defenses and take notes of the faults he found. Gough gave these faults to his division commanders so they could fix them. What is most striking about these noted faults was that they were mostly errors of minor tactics. Examples of the faults noted by Gough are, "Garrisons of posts – not clear of their duties; Distance of brigades' reserves to far; security of rear not attended to."⁵⁵

Of these examples of Gough, the Battle of Ladysmith shows Gough's lack of appreciation of the need to make reflection a stage in his leadership action cycle. The one later in his career, as an Army commander, based on today's leadership criteria defined in FM 22-100, shows that while Gough did reflect daily his thoughts were not developed at the level of a Corps or Army commander. The research suggests that the cause of these problems was because Gough never fully developed the basis of military knowledge through a dedicated study of military education.

In his childhood, he struggled through a private school and did poorly in his studies. He demonstrated great potential, but because of the loss of a brother and sister, and separation from his parents, Gough did not have the drive to excel at his studies. He did graduate with honors from the Royal Military College of Sandhurst, but his honors were in

areas such as military law, topography and horse riding and not military theory and history⁵⁶. Throughout his professional military career, like the majority of his peers, Gough did not study military theory and history, or the different cultures of his environment. Since he never developed a sound understanding of military theory and history from which to reflect upon, he had less to draw from to ask “What is and is not happening?”. Because of this, when he did reflect, he did not have a well-rounded basis to help him identify opportunities and let him take the initiative. Therefore, as his environment changed through the evolution of weapon systems and tactics of deployment, he was not able to fully understand and develop solutions to solve the problems of this new and changing system, instead he solved simplistic symptoms of the problem.

As Clausewitz’s states in his book, *On War*, “ Nearly every general known to us as mediocre, even vacillating, was noted for dash and determination as a junior officer.”⁵⁷ However, Clausewitz also warned, that as a leader rises in rank and responsibility, “the greater is the need for boldness to be supported by a reflective mind, so that boldness does not degenerate into purposeless bursts of blind passion.”⁵⁸

General Maxse was best known for his ability to train soldiers. One reason why he developed a reputation for his ability to train was because of the ingenuity and initiative he used in developing his training methods, and in finding ways to train when his peers and superiors found excuses not to train. Early in his career as a battalion commander, Maxse’s battalion was moved to a new garrison where there was no small arms firing range. There was also no money to build firing ranges. This is one of the reasons why the norm at that time, during peacetime soldiering resources were scarce, soldiers were lucky

to actually fire weapons, usually not their own, once a year. Maxse did not settle for those excuses. Through his own initiative he found the money and resources to build a small arms firing range, operate it and provide free ammunition to his soldiers.⁵⁹ While his fellow battalion commanders were mocking him, his soldiers became expert marksman and in 1905 won the McCalmont Cup at the London District Rifle meeting.⁶⁰

Later in his career as the Eighteenth Division commander, Maxse continuously used his initiative to find ways to train when little money, resources, weapons and ammunition was available. Again, while his peers complained that there was no guidance or resources to train their units, Maxse acted and created a way. He found the weapons and ammunition to train his infantry and artillery soldiers. He also made sure no time or asset was wasted. Maxse developed a technique of having the soldiers, that were not firing that day, and horses train adjacent to those that were firing so everyone became used to that type of an environment.⁶¹

Another reason why he developed his reputation for training was that his system produced highly effective units, and leaders, at all levels, which demonstrated extraordinary initiative. One way he developed initiative in his subordinates was through a practice in his division to tell his subordinates as much as possible of impending operations long before they occurred. In his notes for a lecture he wrote, “ ‘ Keep sections together – have conferences.’ By ‘conferences’ he meant telling the men as much as possible about forthcoming operations.”⁶²

General Maxse believed in thorough preparation before an operation. He ensured his soldiers were prepared by first informing them, second teaching them a well-developed

method to conduct the type of operation that was upcoming, third train them on that method, fourth, if possible, to reconnoiter the ground the mission would take place on, and finally to rehearse the mission down to the lowest level possible. As a division commander, his training sessions and rehearsals normally included all leaders down to platoon level. Most people would consider this micro-management. General Maxse believed that by teaching and training his leaders at least one specific method to conduct a task, and thoroughly informing them about the purpose of the mission, they would have the necessary tools to be able to see and exploit opportunities as they arose during the combat operation. By having learned “a way” and understanding the principles behind that method, they became competent enough on that task to be able to modify it based on their situation. Through this method he empowered his subordinates, and more importantly, prepared them so that as things changed, they had a basis to transition from, and the knowledge to recognize the changes. As General Gough, Maxse superior commander during several battles, commented, “ he (Maxse) never failed to encourage initiative among his subordinates.”⁶³

As a Corps commander, General Maxse participated in Fifth Army’s March 1918 defense and later infamous retreat. Both General Gough (Fifth Army commander) and Haig (BEF commander) praised him for the thoroughness of his unit’s preparation. Maxse impressed both commanders by his analysis of the enemy course of action. In fact, General Haig criticized him because he felt his plan relied too much on the enemy doing exactly what Maxse planned them to do. However, history showed the value of his

preparation. He was widely proclaimed the most successful corps commander in Fifth Army during their conduct of the retreat.⁶⁴

Why was General Maxse able to successfully analyze the enemy in March of 1918? How did General Maxse always find ways to train and prepare better than his peers? The answer to both questions was found in General Maxse's ability to clearly and calmly think through problems. He learned to do this early in his life. His father, a Navy Admiral, encouraged his children to do or say more or less, what they liked, as long as anything they tackled was given their full attention and energy. He allowed his children to challenge him and express their opinions, but demanded they do so after thorough research and reflection on the subject. Maxse's education was well rounded and classically based. He excelled in his studies and scored twenty-seventh out of 105 on his entrance exams to the Royal Military College of Sandhurst.⁶⁵

Throughout his career, Maxse constantly furthered his military education by studying historical battles, participating in and conducting after action reviews of his and other organizations' operations, and honing his ability to reflect on the lessons learned. He wrote numerous articles for military publications and published three books before becoming a Corps commander.

Tactical Skill

The U.S. Army's leader development must concentrate on those characteristics a leader must have to excel on the modern battlefield: technical and tactical competence; the ability to develop well-thought-out concepts understood and supported by all; the ability to make rapid and accurate decisions – coherent, faster than the enemy; the ability to take prudent risks – bold, confident operators with sound judgement; the ability to exploit opportunities – aggressive, take the offensive, seize the initiative; the ability to leverage technology; genuine concern and caring for soldiers and families.

General Carl E. Vuono
Chief of Staff of the Army⁶⁶

According to FM 22-100, the definition of tactical skill is the ability of a leader to make correct decisions about employment and maneuver of forces on the battlefield. A leader must be able to effectively analyze the tactical problem he is facing through creative thinking and moral and critical reasoning, to determine the true nature of the problem. Indispensable to a leader is the intellectual capacity to handle complex mental tasks, to see relationships between apparently unrelated variables, to see incomplete information, and to draw accurate conclusions from rudimentary data.⁶⁷ The leader must take this understanding of the problem, and with his technical knowledge of the terrain, equipment, and weapon systems in his organization, synthesize these variables to arrive at a competent solution. Finally, through his interpersonal skills he must effectively communicate this solution via orders, commander's critical information requirements, and his commander's intent. This analysis focused on Generals Maxse and Gough's ability to effectively use their interpersonal, conceptual, and technical skills and their inter-relationships, to help them develop plans and employ units – their tactical skills.

General Gough's conceptual skills were immature and did not develop as he increased in rank and authority, and the systems (military organizations) he commanded became

much more complex. General Gough's role as an Army commander was one of an organizational leader, yet his actions and thought processes stayed at the direct leadership role. Again, looking back at the simplistic noted faults he made of his division and brigade commanders while preparing the defense for the March 1918 German offense, we see an example of an Army commander who spent the majority of his time visiting units on the front and only making corrections of minor tactical errors.⁶⁸ He was not operating at the organizational level. General Gough's comments showed that he was not looking at the defense as a system and trying to determine what the second- and third-order effects would have on the successful accomplishment of his mission. He was not getting past the surface of the problem and thinking about the problem in depth. This clearly demonstrated that his conceptual skills were immature and therefore, he did not identify the changes that were required.

During the preparation of this same defense, one of General Gough's key complaints to the GHQ staff was that his people were inexperienced in defensive operations. The majority of his soldiers were replacements that had been in action for a year or less and had only participated in the British offensive operations in the spring and fall of 1917. An organizational level leader must have the ability to plan and supervise his units current mission, predict future requirement of his unit, and prepare them to successfully meet those future challenges. Gough should have realized that at some point in the campaign his organization would have to defend. He needed to conduct creative thinking to help him determine those future requirements.

Gough's lack of critical reasoning and creative thinking to solve problems and discover new or improved methods to the tactical and organizational problems he faced was not his fault alone. Obviously, his Corps and Division commanders should have been solving problems and developing methods to deal with these problems also. The research suggests that he lacked the necessary feedback from his subordinate commanders to get the information he needed. One reason General Gough did not get this feedback was because of poor dialogue with his subordinate commanders. Dialogue refers to the process of active communication between members of a group, where each member suspends his or her pre-conceived thoughts and communicates in the group in the hope that all participants will gain a better and new view of the topic. In a discussion one party attempts to persuade the other parties into accepting his concept. In dialogue new views emerge as a by-product of the process.⁶⁹

General Gough's relations with his subordinate commanders on the surface seemed good but his Chief of Staff, Neill Malcolm, had a harsh manner that caused resentment and uncertainty about General Gough's real feelings. When Gough's Chief of Staff believed that a subordinate commander had not tried hard enough in an operation, he would threaten to delay their unit's relief until the task had been achieved. When visiting the commander, Gough would not severely criticize them as his staff had, and confused his commanders on his true intentions.⁷⁰ This caused Gough's commanders to lose trust in him, question his competence, and worst of all, they became scared and unmotivated to try new methods for fear of failure. They listened to Gough and discussed issues with him, but would not let their guard down to enter into a dialogue with him or his Chief of Staff.

“The day soldiers stop bring you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help them or concluded that you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership.”⁷¹

Some historians have blamed Malcolm for this breakdown in communication between Gough and his commanders. Malcolm had been Gough’s Chief of Staff since he was a Cavalry Division commander up until February of 1918 when he was an Army Commander. However, the majority of the historians feel that Gough had to have known the personality of Malcolm and knew the way his Chief of Staff operated within his staff and with his subordinate commanders. Therefore, it was Gough’s weak interpersonal skills allowed this communication problem develop.

All leaders must be open to both positive and negative feedback on their personnel and unit’s performance. Using effective interpersonal skills, leaders should get this feedback, and if they do not get it, they should find out why and correct the problem. Without this feedback, leaders do not have all the data they need to reflect on their unit’s performance. It is through reflective thinking that leaders discover the explanations for their unit’s performance and therefore gain insight on how to improve their unit’s performance.⁷²

General Maxse had well-developed interpersonal skills. He believed in listening to his subordinates and through effective dialogue with them, French forces, and observing German tactics, he implemented many new tactics and techniques. General Maxse was among the first British commanders to accept the new German concepts of attack by infiltration and defense in greater depth. His fire support officer, Major Alan Brooke learned from the French a new technique of using indirect fires as a creeping or rolling

barrage on a timed system in support of the infantry advance. Soon after first observing tanks as part of an offense and listening to his subordinates, Maxse gave his support to an original system of attack, using separate tank formations.⁷³ Maxse continually supported these new concepts and made a point to become technically competent on the new weapon systems, when many other British commanders were dismissive of them. Maxse despised officers who did not think it was necessary to become technically skilled on the new weapon systems and felt they only needed to understand the principles they were based on.

Through his dialogue with colleagues, subordinate and allied leaders, Maxse was able to gather the information he needed to use his ability to reflect. Through critical reasoning and creative thinking he took the initial ideas, his gained technical understanding and developed new methods to solve new and old tactical problems as the style of warfare evolved during the war. His creative thinking allowed him to harness his intellectual capability to interpret simultaneously the strategic and tactical realities, and develop appropriate operational solutions by means of system thinking. Once he arrived at a solution, he educated his organization on the new methods (not just schoolhouse principles), set standards, and trained and rehearsed them down to the lowest level.

General Maxse did not struggle with the problem of under- or over-supervising his subordinates like General Gough. While Maxse understood that micromanaging his subordinates would lead to their lack of initiative, he also knew that under-supervising can lead to failure, especially where subordinate units lack the training for the task. Maxse did not defer his duties of developing, educating and training the leadership in his Division or

Corps. He established a standard and enforced a directive training program because he knew tough training saved lives in battle and that training generated confidence in the organization and its leaders, which in turn strengthened the morale of every soldier. This assertiveness was in great contrast with General Gough's demonstrated passiveness for directing and enforcing standards of training, a passiveness that was so great a contrast with his earlier reputation for boldness.

Maxse firmly believed that training directives must deal with methods rather than principles. "His men were given specific instructions on how to tackle every stage of an attack and not, as in many divisions, merely reminded of a few general principles of warfare and left to get on with it."⁷⁴ He knew that his leaders and soldiers had to be fully trained on "a way" and that that knowledge would allow them to modify it based on their situation. This provided a basis for initiative. This training occurred continuously even if it required him to weaken front lines so units could train.

As a last step to Maxse's training process, he required and facilitated numerous rehearsals. "He believed in unremitting practice; every set piece attack planned by the Eighteenth Division was incessantly rehearsed on ground specially selected for its similarity to the future battlefield."⁷⁵ General Maxse believed that four critical outcomes resulted from the rehearsals that he conducted to the lowest level. The outcomes were: 1) effective communication of the commander's intent, 2) subordinates gained ownership of the plan, 3) provided framework for synchronization and orchestration, and 4) standards were clearly established and communicated.

General Maxse was continuously thinking into the future. He knew his units would someday be required to defend, so he trained that task when time was available during the closing days of the British offensive operations of 1917. While most Corps commanders were struggling with getting their positions ready for the Fifth Army's defense against the March 1918 German offensive, General Maxse's Corps attained the same level of preparation and every battalion had at least ten days of training on defensive and retrograde operations.⁷⁶ This example also demonstrated Maxse's mastery of the skill of resourcing. As an organizational leader, he aggressively managed his resources, including time, to ensure the readiness of his unit.

In late 1917, Maxse wrote a paper suggesting a reorganization of the infantry platoon. He did this because he foresaw the problem that the British forces would face with depleted reinforcements. He wrote,

"Why not consider the future organization of platoons in 1918, when we shall be worse off for manpower, *now*. Rather than cut numbers in platoons why not double Lewis guns. Train companies to operate on wider fronts and have intervals between fire units....Teach each fire unit to keep together and support its neighbor with fire."⁷⁷

General Maxse was truly a conceptual thinker, that clearly communicated his vision and intent, and was always looking for ways to be better prepared for whatever the future brought.

Learning

You [must] broaden your competence through self-development. You will not get everything you need to develop to your maximum potential from our schools or while on the job. You must work on your own. That requires your self-discipline and sacrifice, but the payoff to you and the Army is great.

General Carl E. Vuono
Chief of Staff of the Army⁷⁸

The definition of learning in FM 22-100 has two distinct aspects. One aspect is the ability to seek and gain self-improvement, and the other is the ability to lead and cause organizational growth. Both Generals Maxse and Gough's early educational experience has already been described in the initiative section of this chapter. It is clear that General Gough's experience was one of loneliness and unachieved potential. While General Maxse's experience was nurtured by his father's openness and his classical-based private schooling. The research suggests that these early experiences gave General Maxse a propensity towards continually learning.

General Maxse was what Stephen Brookfield in his book *Understanding and Facilitating Learning* calls a self-directed learner. "Self-directed learning is defined as a process in which individuals take the initiative in designing learning experiences, diagnosing needs, locating resources, and evaluating learning."⁷⁹ Self directed learning takes place when the learner assumes the responsibility of planning and directing learning. General Maxse clearly demonstrated this characteristic numerous times throughout his career. Early on when he became bored with his assignment, he turned to learning different languages and about the Hindu culture. When General Gough became bored in his first assignment, he turned to horses.

Reflection is critical to learning. The leader must relate the outcomes of his decision and action to the situation and to potential future action. This will provide him insight on how he needs to modify his personal and organization's behavior to become more effective. If the leader is not inclined to reflect, or his intellectual framework to reflect on is weak, he will not learn from his personal experiences or identify correctly if a change is needed. It is during this process of reflection that leaders recognize and develop lessons learned.

As a division commander, General Maxse convinced his Corps commander to change the "H-hour" for the Corps attacks. General Maxse learned by his experience that the normal "H-hour" at dawn had many disadvantages and learned that an "H-hour" in the early afternoon was tactically smarter. This innovative method allowed the soldiers to get more sleep and better fed before the attack. It also allowed less daylight time for the enemy to bring observed indirect fire on the attackers' once they had defeated the enemy. This method did not give the Germans time to reorganize and counter-attack either, because night would arrive before they could get the resources organized. This then allowed the British time to better organize their new positions to prepare for any counter-attack.⁸⁰ This lesson learned proved to be very effective. However, when General Maxse was a Corps commander under General Gough (Fifth Army commander), "H-hour" remained at dawn.⁸¹

When General Gough was a Cavalry Division commander, his division was designated a reserve force and was preparing for an offensive. During the preparation, Gough had an opportunity to visit his brother who was the Chief of Staff to General Haig. Gough's

brother had developed a new method of positioning reserves farther forward where they would be safe from deadly enemy fire and from which they could quickly enter the fighting zone so the momentum of the attack could be maintain. Gough had seen this new method in writing and discussed it with his brother. Yet, he did not implement the new method. Later, when discussing the attack and its failure to maintain its offensive thrust he was still struggling with this problem.⁸²

The research does not allow a person to determine if General Gough failed to learn the same lesson Maxse and Gough's brother did, or if Gough was displaying the normal British dislike to new ideas. In either case, it was a failure. In their book *Military Misfortunes*, Cohen and Gooch argue that there are three types of failure. The failure to learn – failure to absorb readily accessible lessons from recent history, the failure to adapt – an inability to handle the changing present, and the failure to adapt—the inability to predict and take appropriate measures to deal with an enemy or friendly action.⁸³ General Gough was guilty of all three types of failure.

A person's ability to learn is important. However, the Army, like most organizations, recognize that it is not the leader's ability to self develop that is most important, but the leaders impact on the subordinates or organization's ability to learn and their ultimate productivity that is the true measure of the leaders performance. To facilitate subordinates ability to learn, the leader of an organization must create an environment conducive to learning. He must be an effective facilitator of adult learning.

Stephen Brookfield states that an effect facilitator of adult learning must:

- ◆ realize that Adults are “performance-centered” learners in that they wish to apply newly acquired skills or knowledge to their immediate circumstances
- ◆ establish a physical and psychological climate conducive to learning
- ◆ involve learners in mutual planning of methods and curricular directions
- ◆ help learners to carry out their learning plans
- ◆ involve learners in evaluating their learning⁸⁴

As shown in the tactical skill section of this chapter, General Maxse clearly understood and practiced these principles of adult learning.

An important difference between the leadership styles of Generals Maxse and Gough was their level of participation in their organizations learning. Maxse was clearly fully involved with his units learning and training. As stated previously, he trained down to company and platoon leader level as a Corps commander. He did not defer his duties of developing, educating and training his subordinate leaders. He sets clear standards, participated in teaching new tactics, techniques and procedures, and enforced a directive training program. Once General Gough became a Corps commander, he became frustrated with the balance between micro-management of subordinates and taking the responsibility to make and lead necessary changes in his units. Effective facilitators of adult learning “balance the scales” between, ensuring that standards are met and the objectives of a course are adhered to, and allowing the learners to have an equal, but constructive role in the development of a courses’ curriculum or group goals.⁸⁵

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

Just as there are two types of diamonds – gem and industrial quality – there are two types of leadership. The first type, the gem quality, is functional if we only desire our leadership to appear beautiful. The second, or industrial quality – though not cleaved, faceted and polished – is the more functional because its uses are creative. The Army's need is for the industrial quality, the creative quality of leadership. Just as the diamond requires three properties for its formation – carbon, heat and pressure – successful leaders require the interaction of three properties – character, knowledge and application. Like carbon to the diamond, *character* is the basic quality of the leaders. . . . But as carbon alone does not create a diamond, neither can character alone create a leader. The diamond needs heat. Man needs *knowledge*, study and preparation. . . . The third property, pressure – acting in conjunction with carbon and heat – forms the diamond. Similarly, one's character attended by knowledge, blooms through *application* to produce a leader.

General Edward C. Meyer
Former Army Chief of Staff⁸⁶

Introduction

The study of General Maxse and Gough's leadership characteristics during World War I, a major transitional period of warfare, revealed that certain leadership characteristics allowed them to adapt more easily in an evolving environment and facilitated successful battlefield leadership. Maxse had certain leadership characteristics that allowed him to successfully adapt in a changing environment. Gough lacked the same level of these characteristics that resulted in his inability to adapt to the new emerging conditions. These characteristics were moral courage, initiative, tactical skill and the application of knowledge through effective, continual learning.

Personal Courage

“Leading change means doing two jobs at once – getting the organization through today and getting the organization into tomorrow.”⁸⁷ Leadership during a transitional period requires a direct, hands-on approach. It requires trust, clarity of organizational vision, and a leader courageously leading the organization into the future. Like Maxse, this leader must be in front of his organization and pull them in this direction not push them from behind.⁸⁸

In chapter 3, this monograph presented two clear examples of General Gough being shown new methods that were needed. However, he did not have the moral courage to change the system. These examples were when Gough’s brother clearly showed him a new tactic of positioning reserves farther forward so the momentum of the attack could be maintained, and Gough’s first hand observation of Maxse’s Eighteenth Corps training program that allowed his unit to train and prepare the defense. While both Maxse and Gough exhibit high levels of physical courage, Maxse displayed a much higher level of moral courage and proved that it is this characteristic that facilitates a leaders disposition to be successful during a period of change.

In other examples it was not as clear if General Gough did not have the conceptual skills to discover the true meaning of the problems, and through reflective and creative thinking develop new, effective solutions, or if he did not have the moral courage to direct and implement the new methods he discovered because of his propensity to do things they way they had always been done. However, it is clear that either one or both of these failures caused him to either not recognize and/or adapt to the new emerging conditions.

Initiative

Clausewitz emphasized the need for bold risk takers. Leaders must learn the difference between risk and recklessness. Taking chances without first reflecting is the latter.

“In spite of the advances of technology, the worth of the individual man is still decisive. The open order of combat accentuates his importance. Every individual must be trained to exploit a situation with energy and boldness and must be imbued with the idea that success will depend upon his initiative and action.”⁸⁹

Successful commanders like General Maxse applied their leadership characteristics in a way that took the initiative. This helped him to adapt and act faster than General Gough as their environment changed. The example of Gough losing two thirds of his regiment, showed us that General Gough’s impulsiveness and propensity to make hasty decisions detracted from his development to instinctively reflect on his situation and identify opportunities to gain the initiative and situations that led to disasters.

Interpersonal skill

To enhance the leaders tactical skill, leaders must develop an interpersonal skill that will allow them to develop their ability to dialogue with subordinates, peers and superiors, to obtain the feedback they need to use as the basis for reflective thinking. General Maxse demonstrated that this increased his ability to anticipate future requirements and allowed him to prepare his units. It also provided a basis for creative thinking that helped him discover new methods and/or tactics to solve both old and new problems as they evolved during the transitional period his military was going through.

The research showed that while both leaders displayed physical courage by frequently visiting the front line troops, both did not get the same feedback from subordinate leaders.

General Maxse, through his ability to dialogue with his subordinates and peers, and his enhanced ability to use critical, and reflective thinking, gained an insight into the true organizational and strategic problems. He was able to gather the information he needed using his strong interpersonal skills because he had shown his fellow soldiers that he was open to new ideas and valued their thoughts. General Gough never developed this same level of interpersonal skills with his fellow soldiers. The command climate created by the interaction of Gough and his Chief of Staff had caused his subordinates to lose trust and openness in communications with him.

Conceptual

Another difference between Gough and Maxse is the way they used the information they gained by visiting the front line. Maxse took the information and used creative thinking to develop solutions that would allow his organization to adapt to the changing environment and style of warfare. However, General Gough, who lacked the propensity and basis for reflective and critical thinking, at the organizational level, only gained insights to symptoms of the problem – minor tactical errors.

Maxse's strategic outlook of the upcoming shortage of soldiers and helping to lessen the problem by proposing a new infantry platoon organization based on emerging weapon technology is an example of the creative and predictive thinking characteristic needed of leaders to be successful during transitional periods. Future U.S. Army training implications, with increased emphasis on specialties and weapon technology, makes predicting future requirements and training towards them even more important in order to maintain qualification and certification.

Leaders who were successful during a transitional period had been system thinkers. Critical reasoning allowed leaders to understand the relationships between the variables of a system. This capability becomes much more important as the variables and their relationships become more diverse and dynamic as the way we operate on the battlefield in the future increases in non-linearity. Stability and Support Operations (SASO) requires leaders with increased capability for critical reasoning and creative thinking since the cause to the problems are much more complex and ambiguous. It will demand a greater understanding of geopolitics and emerging technologies in Third World nations. It is through this type of analysis that soldiers can develop leadership characteristics needed to excel in SASO.

Learning

Analyzing Generals Maxse and Gough has shown that four factors are critical to developing the leader characteristic of learning. A characteristic that helped Maxse to create a learning military organization that was prepared to successfully accomplish it's current mission and prepare for future missions. First, leaders must have the communication skills to effectively dialogue with the members of their unit. This requires them to be open to new ideas, approachable and available, and seek and give feedback. Secondly, leaders must have and assist members in their organizations to obtain a holistic education. Like Maxse's education, this should be founded on the knowledge of military theory and history and used as a basis for reflection. Third, leaders need to develop and enforce directive training programs that establish a standard, and are based on future requirements. Extensive preliminary training, thoroughness, and excellence marked

Maxse's training standards. It was professional and based on open-minded evaluation of the lessons of battle. Finally, leaders must be tactically and technically competent and should empower their subordinates. This ability to empower, adapt and envision did and will help increase motivation, confidence, and instill initiative during a transitional period.

Conclusion

Nothing can replace intellect, courage and confidence in warfighting. All the technology in the world will not help military leaders if they lack the freedom, wit and talent to use it. More than ever, military organizations will depend on a leader's personal courage, conceptual skills, and initiative to do the job in smaller and smaller units, with increased lethality, spread further apart, in increasingly complex and ambiguous environments. Leaders who were successful in a transitional period were able to observe, reflect, decide, act, and learn faster and more decisively.

U.S. Army leaders must be creative, intuitive, dynamic, and able to make contemplated decisions, and have the courage and determination to act on them. The requirement for developing those leaders is an important one for the United States and a demanding one for the U.S. Army. Additional research is needed in several areas. TRADOC needs to research and determine when and how to educate, train and develop the leadership characteristics that this monograph has identified that suggests an acceptance of changing conditions in warfare. The Army should conduct research to determine if the characteristics for leaders to be successful during a transitional period are different from the leadership characteristics needed once the transition is completed.

Notes

¹Giulio Douhet, *The Command of the Air*, trans. by Dino Ferrari. Ed. by Richard H. Kohn and Joseph P. Harahan, (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1983) 30.

²Internet, "Army Mission and Vision", URL www.army.mil/mission_vision.htm, June 1998, 1.

³U.S. Department of the Army, FM 22-100, *Army Leadership: Revised Final Draft*, (Washington DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, June 1998), 1-10. Hereinafter, FM 22-100 (June, 1998).

⁴Jonathan Bailey, *The First World War and the Birth of the Modern Style of Warfare*, Number 22, (United Kingdom: Strategic & Combat Studies Institute, 1996), 3,17-21,31-34.

⁵John A.English, *On Infantry*, (New York: Praeger, 1984), 9-22.

⁶Paddy Griffith, *Forward Into Battle: Fighting Tactics from Waterloo to Vietnam*, (Strettington, Sussex: Anthony Bird, 1981), 95-96.

⁷David T.Zabecki, *Steel Wind: Colonel Georg Bruchmuller and the Birth of Modern Artillery*, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1994), 1-17.

⁸Bailey, 31-32.

⁹James S. Corum, *The Luftwaffe: Creating The Operational Air War 1918-1940*, (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 29-34.

¹⁰Bailey, 23.

¹¹Internet, "Leadership and Change...In a Value-Based Army", URL www.hqda.army.mil/ocsa/whte_ppr.htm, December 1997. 16.

¹²FM 22-100 (June, 1998), vii.

¹³Ibid., p. 1-3.

¹⁴Webster's New World Dictionary, Second Concise ed., s.v. "values."

¹⁵FM 22-100 (June, 1998), p. 2-2.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 2-9.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 2-9.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 2-13, 2-14.

¹⁹U.S. Department of the Army, FM 22-100, *Army Leadership: Selected Review Version*, (Washington DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, October 1998), 4-10 and 6-11. Hereinafter, FM 22-100 (October, 1998)

²⁰FM 22-100 (June, 1998), pp. 2-29, 2-30.

²¹Ibid., p. 4-5.

²²Dietrich Dörner, *The Logic of Failure: Why Things Go Wrong and What We Can Do to Make Them Right*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989), 73.

²³FM 22-100 (June, 1998), p. 7-11.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 2-33, 2-34.

²⁵Ibid., p. 5-31.

²⁶General Matthew B. Ridgeway, "Leadership," *Military Review* XLVI (October 1966): 43.

²⁷General Staff Officer, Grade 1, or Chief of Staff as he would be described today.

²⁸John Baynes, *Far From A Donkey: The Life of General Sir Ivor Maxse KCB, CVO, DSO*, (London: Brassey's, 1995), 129,130.

²⁹Anthony Farrar-Hockley, *The Life of General Sir Hubert Gough CGB, GCMG, KCVO: Goughie*, (London: Hart-Davis, MacGibbon Ltd., 1975), 131.

³⁰Ibid., 141.

³¹During this time of the war, the normal division frontage was about 3,000 meters.

³²General Headquarters, the field Headquarters of the British Expeditionary force.

³³This is but one example. Several times throughout the preparation of this operation, Gough accepted less than adequate answers from GHQ. Gough specifically requested more people for work details, defensive barrier material, additional divisions to decrease the frontage per division, and tanks and artillery forces. In most cases he was refused or received less than he felt was necessary. Yet Gough never brought these confrontations to Haig, and on several occasions during this period, Gough talked to Haig on the telephone and in person. Farrar-Hockley, 253-271.

³⁴Ibid., 213-219.

³⁵Ibid., 213-219.

³⁶Ibid., 213.

³⁷Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), 102, 103.

³⁸Ibid., p. 103.

³⁹Baynes, 115-117.

⁴⁰Ibid., 200-201.

⁴¹Ibid., 237.

⁴²Robert A. Fitton, ed., *Leadership: Quotations from the Military Tradition*, (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1990), 127-128.

⁴³Gordon R. Sullivan and Michael V. Harper, *Hope is Not A Method*, (New York: Random House, 1996), 56.

⁴⁴Ibid., 49-52.

⁴⁵Robin P. Swan, Lieutenant Colonel, School of Advanced Military Studies Directors Statement, (1998), 1.

⁴⁶James J. Schneider, *HOW WAR WORKS: The Origins, Nature, and Purpose of Military Theory*, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: School of Advanced Military Studies, 1995), 7-10.

⁴⁷James J. Schneider, *WHAT IF WE FIGHT TONIGHT? Advanced Military Education for the XXIst Century*, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: School of Advanced Military Studies, 1995), 8.

⁴⁸Sullivan and Harper, 55-56.

⁴⁹Ibid., 46-47.

⁵⁰Ibid., 47.

⁵¹Ibid., 51.

⁵²Farrar-Hockley, 34.

⁵³When Gough's unit first discovers this enemy detachment, they were in an open field and in a position that did not allow Gough's unit to conduct a surprise attack. Gough directed his unit to remain in a hide position, and set observers in place to watch the enemy element. A short time later, when the enemy detachment moved into a creek bed, a position that offered the opportunity for Gough's unit to move undetected, Gough issued the attack order. Farrar-Hockley, 64-65.

⁵⁴Ibid., 64-68.

⁵⁵Ibid., 261-262.

⁵⁶Ibid., 11.

⁵⁷Clausewitz, 191.

⁵⁸Ibid., 190.

⁵⁹Maxse held a unit formation and presented the problem and his solution to his soldiers. He asked everyone to donate a small amount of money to build the range. He also told them, with their approval, he would use profits from the officer and soldiers' lounges to buy ammunition, rifles, and maintain the range facilities. Unit members would be able to shoot anytime they desired, and would not have to be in uniform. He emphasized that this was not an order and gave his men time to discuss his proposal and approve or disapprove of it. His soldiers unanimously approved his proposition. Baynes, 94-95.

⁶⁰Ibid., 95-96.

⁶¹Ibid., 126-127.

⁶²Ibid., 170.

⁶³Ibid., 150.

⁶⁴Farrar-Hockley, 265-303.

⁶⁵Baynes, 8-12.

⁶⁶Carl E. Vuono, *Collected Works of the Thirty-First Chief of Staff, United States Army*, ed. Douglas D. Brisson (Washington, D.C., date unknown), 31.

⁶⁷Thomas E. Cronin, "Thinking and Learning About Leadership," in *Military Leadership: In Pursuit of Excellence*, 2d ed. (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1992), 76.

⁶⁸Farrar-Hockley, 261-262.

⁶⁹Peter M Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization*, (New York: Currency Doubleday, 1994), 238-247.

⁷⁰Farrar-Hockley, 227, 238-240.

⁷¹General (Ret) Colin Powell, n.d. General, *Quotations from General Colin Powell: A Leadership Primer*. Copy of document in possession of author, School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1. General Powell was the Chairman, Joint Chief of Staff.

⁷²FM 22-100 (October, 1998),p. 4-8.

⁷³Baynes, 137-138, 152, 175.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 150.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 131.

⁷⁶ Farrar-Hockley, 265-266.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 181.

⁷⁸Vuono, 163.

⁷⁹Stephen D. Brookfield, *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1990), 40.

⁸⁰Baynes, 153-154.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 172.

⁸²Farrar-Hockley, 150-152.

⁸³Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes*, (New York: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1990), 26-27.

⁸⁴Brookfield, 101-102.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 123-126.

⁸⁶Edward C. Meyer, *E.C. Meyer General, United States Army Chief of Staff June 1979-June 1983*, (Washington, D.C., date unknown),104.

⁸⁷Sullivan and Harper, 53.

⁸⁸Cronin, 64-72.

⁸⁹United States War Department, Field Service Regulations: FM 100-5, *Operations*, (Washington, DC: GPO, 1944), 2.

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